EXCISE

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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

Saigon 5722

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Action
Info

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HEREWITH HUE 194 DATED SEPT 10 SIGNED CORCORCN

III MAF PASS INFO ROUTINE 123 TO POLAD FRANCIS

REF: HUE'S 127

1. DURING LAST WEEK REMNANTS OF STRUGGLE FORCES HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN OPPOSING NCA ELECTION. EFFORT HAS LARGELY REVOLVED AROUND DISSEMINATION OF LEAFLETS, DESTRUCTION OF CAMPAIGN POSTERS AND HANDBILLS, AND RUMOR CAMPAIGNS AGAINST CANDIDATES AND ELECTION.

2. STRUGGLE SEEMS BASICALLY TO HAVE DIVIDED INTO TWO MAIN BRANCHES. BUDDHISTS MONKS AND NUNS ORGANIZATION CALLED COMMITTEE FOR PRESERVATION OF BUDDHISM AND PEOPLE IN THUA THIEN (UY BAN BAO VE PHAT GIAO VA DAN TOC THUA THIEN) AND THE

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GROUPS OF LAY BUDDHISTS. INITIALLY AFTER STRUGGLE, PAMPLETS WERE BEING ISSUED BY GROUP CALLING ITSELF HUNG VIETS (VIETNAM RENAISSANCE) BUT THEN INFORMATION RECEIVED THAT GROUP HAD CEASED ACTION IN NAME OF HUNG VIETS. BY LATE AUGUST PRIMARY LAY ORGANIZATION SEEMED TO BE COMMITTEE FOR SALVATION (OR RESCUE) OF BUDDHISM (UY BAN CUU NGUY PHAT GIAO). THIS GROUP UNDER NGUYEN KHAC TU, FORMERLY HEAD OF BUDDHIST FAMILY ORGANIZATION (GIA DINH PHAT TU) IN CENTRAL VIETNAM AND REPORTEDLY A COMMUNIST (REFTEL) SEEMED TO GATHER MOST STRUGGLE LEADERS STILL AT LARGE INTO ONE ORGANIZATION. LAY ORGANIZATION OPERATED UNDER GREATER RESTRICTIONS THAN DID CLERICAL ORGANIZATION WHICH CLAIMED DIRECT AFFILIATION WITH VHD (HUE 171), AND ACTING RECTOR

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THICH THIEN HOA. THEREFORE MOST OF RECENT PROPAGANDIZING HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE FOR PRESERVATION OF BUDDHISM AND THE PEOPLE.

3. BUDDHIST MONKS AND NUNS ORGANIZATION HAS APPARENTLY LIMITED ITSELF TO PASSIVE RESISTANCE, PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS AND CALLS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION. THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATED LAY ORGANIZATIONS MIGHT COMMIT TERRORIST ACTS. APPARENTLY SOME EVIDENCE MIGHT HAVE BEEN STRUGGLE GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR AUGUST 17 EXPLOSION AT THE HUE FAIR. ADDITIONAL REPORTS THAT STRUGGLE YOUTH MIGHT GRENADE VOTING BOOTHS. b-1 ec

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4. MOST RECENT EFFORT BY BUDDHISTS ENTAILS HUNGER STRIKE (HUE 191) HOWEVER EFFORTS TO HAVE SYMPATHY STRIKES AT THREE MAIN HUE MARKETS UNSUCCESSFUL. NIGHT AUGUST 8 AND 9 MANY LEAFLETS APPEARED. GENERALLY FOLLOWED LINE OF PREVIOUS LEAFLETS CONCERNING BOYCOTT OF ELECTIONS, HOWEVER FOR FIRST TIME SINCE MID-JULY LEAFLETS SIGNED AGAIN BY HUNG VIET. ALSO LEAFLETS BY COUNCIL FOR SALVATION OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE (HOI DONG CUU NGUY DAN TOC VIETNAM), RADICAL BUDDHISTS (PHAT TU CAP TIEN), AND COMMITTEE FOR PRESERVATION OF BUDDHISM AND PEOPLE.

5. COMMENTS: ALTHOUGH STRUGGLE VERY ACTIVE IN TERMS OF LEAFLETS, APPEARS THAT SO FAR AUTHORITIES HAVE MAINTAINED CONTROL OF SITUATION. IN SPITE OF REPEATED CALLS FOR STRIKES AND DEMONSTRATIONS NONE HAVE RESULTED. EVIDENCE THAT MANY PUBLICATIONS AND LEAFLETS ALTHOUGH USING DIFFERENT NAMES AND PURPORTEDLY REPRESENTING DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS ARE ACTUALLY BEING PRINTED BY SAME PEOPLE AT SEVERAL DIFFERENT LOCATIONS. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION INDICATES THAT AT LEAST MONK AND NUN ELEMENTS OF STRUGGLE HAVE STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT THEIR ABILITY TO EFFECT OUTCOME THIS ELECTION LOCALLY DUE TO STRONG AND CONSISTENT OPPOSITION BY AUTHORITIES. ALTHOUGH UNDOUBTEDLY THERE WILL BE INVALID BALLOTS CAST BY BUDDHIST FAITHFUL, AT THIS POINT IT APPEARS THAT THREAT TO ELECTION LOCALLY COMES PRIMARILY FROM VC AND NOT FROM BUDDHIST STRUGGLERS. b-1 ec

GP-3.
LODGE

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 2:13 A.M., SEPTEMBER 11. PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA 2:13 A.M., SEPTEMBER 11.

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